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Massachusetts Chapter

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American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN



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Dear Parents and Caregivers:

We are writing with recommendations regarding a current shortage of infant and children's pain and fever-reducing medications in stores and pharmacies nationally and in Massachusetts. This shortage includes common liquid preparations of acetaminophen and ibuprofen and other cold and flu medications that can reduce fever.

During this time when we are seeing increased cases of flu and other respiratory viruses, you may be unable to find these medications on pharmacy shelves. While this can be distressing, it's important to remember that fever-reducing medicines do not cure or even shorten the duration of illness. While a fever can be uncomfortable, fever is a sign that your child's body is fighting infection. Low to moderate fevers do not require fever-reducing medications and children are able to tolerate such low fevers well.

There are several steps you can take to help comfort your child if they develop a fever and you are unable to find fever-reducing medications including:

- Encourage your child to drink lots of fluids including water and electrolyte-containing fluids for children. Staying well hydrated is important to help your child feel better and fight the infection.
- Keep their room comfortably cool.
- Dress them in light clothing.

It's important to remember that fever in children should **never** be treated with aspirin or rubbing alcohol as both can cause serious illness.

During this current shortage of fever-reducing medications, it is recommended that you purchase only the quantity that you need for your child, to avoid worsening shortages and ensure available supply for others. **Please note:** If you don't see fever-reducing products on the store shelf, ask the pharmacy staff as they may be storing their limited supply behind the counter.

If you have questions about the medications you have at home, or have purchased, please check with your health care provider or pharmacist. Additional guidance can be found here:

<https://mcaap.org/2018/wp-content/uploads/Parent-Tips-during-Acetaminophen-and-Ibuprofen-Shortage-1.pdf>

Thank you for your assistance during this time.

Dr. Estevan Garcia, Chief Medical Officer
Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Dr. Mary Beth Miotto, President
Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics